

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 6998

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV GR

SUBJECT: UPCOMING CHANGES IN CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT

1. LAST NIGHT, DURING THE COURSE OF A LONG, PRIVATE TALK I HAD WITH DEFENSE MINISTER AVEROFF, I ASKED HIM AT ONE POINT WHETHER THE RUMORS WERE TRUE THAT THERE WOULD BE SOME MINISTERIAL-LEVEL CHANGES IN THE CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT SOON. AVEROFF SAID THAT, YES, THERE CERTAINLY WOULD BE. HE WAS NOT SURE WHEN BUT THOUGHT IT COULD BE DURING COMING WEEKS AND CERTAINLY WELL BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR.

2. ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, AVEROFF SAID, PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS THINKS HE HAS "A GOOD TEAM." AVEROFF SAID HE AGREED AND THAT HE AND CARAMANLIS HAD DISCUSSED SOME SPECIFIC MINISTERIAL CHANGES. AVEROFF SAID THAT HE WOULD REMAIN AS DEFENSE MINISTER AND THAT FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS, COORDINATION MINISTER PAPALIGOURAS, ALTERNATE COORDINATION MINISTER BOUTOS, AND LABOR MINISTER LASKARIS, WOULD ALSO REMAIN IN THEIR PRESENT POSTS. THE MOST IMPORTANT CHANGE WOULD BE THE REPLACEMENT OF SOLON GHIKAS AS MINISTER OF PUBLIC ORDER (GHIKAS HAS NOT BEEN WELL PHYSICALLY OF LATE). AVEROFF SAID THAT CARMANLIS WAS STILL TURNING OVER IN HIS MIND WHO THE SUCCESSORS WOULD BE OF GHIKAS AND SOME "LESS IMPORTANT" MINISTERS WHO HAD JUST NOT LIVED UP TO
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EARLIER EXPECTATIONS.

KUBISCH

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